

REMARKSStatus of the Claims*Pending claims*

Claims 1, 2, 4 to 9, 14 to 16, 19, 20, 23 to 27, **29**, 31, 37 to 39, **44 to 55**, and 60 to 80 are pending (claims 29 and 46 to 55 were inadvertently left off the “pending” list in the OA).

Claims Allowed and Only Objected to

Applicants thank the Examiner for finding that claims 1, 2, 4 to 9, 14 to 16, 19, 20, 23 to 26, 29, 31, 37 to 39, 53 to 55, 63, 64 and 68 to 71 are allowable; and that claims 44, 49 to 51, 60 to 62 and 72 are only objected to (see page 2 of the OA).

Claims canceled and added in the instant amendment

Claims 45 to 48, 60 and 75, are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, after entry of the instant amendment claims 1, 2, 4 to 9, 14 to 16, 19, 20, 23 to 27, 29, 31, 37 to 39, 49 to 55, 61 to 74 and 76 to 80, will be pending and under consideration.

Outstanding Rejections and Objections to the claims

Claims 23, 44, 49 to 51, 60 to 62, 65 and 72 were objected to. Claims 49 to 52, 65 to 67 and 73, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 45 to 48 and 75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for allegedly containing “new matter”.

Applicants respectfully traverse all outstanding objections to and rejection of the claims.

Support for the claim amendments

The specification sets forth an extensive description of the invention in the amended claims. Accordingly, no new matter has been added by the instant amendments.

Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments set forth in this response under 37 CFR §1.116. The amendment places the case in condition for allowance and places the case in better condition for appeal; the amendment does not raise any issues of new matter; and, the amended claims do not present new issues requiring further consideration or search.

Abstract Objection

The Office noted the Abstract should be on a separate sheet of paper, as noted on page 2 of the OA. The instant amendment addresses this issue.

Objections to the claims

Claims 23, 44, 49 to 51, 60 to 62, 65 and 72 were objected to; please see pages 2 to 3, of the OA. The instant amendment endeavors to address these issues.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 49 to 52, 65 to 67 and 73, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for reasons set forth in detail on pages 3 to 4, of the OA.

Applicants thank the Examiner for recommending clarifying amendments. The instant amendment endeavors to address these issues.

In light of the instant amendment, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection under section 112, second paragraph, can be properly withdrawn.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, new matter

Claims 45 to 48 and 75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for allegedly containing “new matter”, as discussed in detail on pages 4 to 5, of the OA. The instant amendment addresses this issue; claims 45 to 48 and 75 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully aver that the Examiner can properly withdraw the objections to and rejections of the amended claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs. In view of the above, claims in this application after entry of the instant amendment are believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejections of the claims and to pass this application to issue.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 564462000502. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

If after reviewing the instant response and amendment the Examiner believes a telephonic interview would help expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 858 720 5133.

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Respectfully submitted,

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